

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

BCP Pg. 367

CELEBRANT The Lord be with you.¹

PEOPLE **And also with you.**

CELEBRANT Lift up your hearts.²

PEOPLE **We lift them to the Lord.**

CELEBRANT Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

PEOPLE **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

The Celebrant proceeds

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who was tempted in every way as we are, yet did not sin. By his grace we are able to triumph over every evil, and to live no longer for ourselves alone, but for him who died for us and rose again.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn³ to proclaim the glory of your Name:

CELEBRANT AND PEOPLE

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.⁴

The People kneel. Then the Celebrant continues

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people⁵; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son⁶. For in these last days⁷ you sent him to be incarnate⁸ from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer⁹ of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth¹⁰, out of sin into righteousness¹¹, out of death into life¹².

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant¹³, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."¹⁴

Therefore, according to his command¹⁵, O Father,

CELEBRANT AND PEOPLE **We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;**

The Celebrant continues

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving¹⁶ to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant.¹⁷ Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice¹⁸, that we may be acceptable through him¹⁹, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit²⁰. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ²¹, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation²², the head of the Church²³, and the author of our salvation.²⁴

By him, and with him, and in him²⁵, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say²⁶,

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

The Celebrant and People sing together

Agnus Dei²⁷

O, Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world,²⁸ have mercy upon us.²⁹

O, Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

O, Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.³⁰

THE PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS³¹

The Celebrant and People

We do not presume to come to your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness³² but in your manifold and great mercies.³³ We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.³⁴ But you are the same Lord,³⁵ whose nature is always to have mercy.³⁶ Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood;³⁷ that we may evermore dwell in him and he in us.³⁸ Amen.

The Celebrant then says the following Invitation

The Gifts of God for the People of God.³⁹ Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.⁴⁰

NOTES ON THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

¹ Ruth 2:4; used as the opening of the Eucharistic prayer as early as the third century in the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus, which reflects the tradition of the apostles before this time period. The phrase is a greeting and a blessing, as well as a kind of opening prayer that asks God to be very present with His people.

² Sursum Corda: this Latin phrase is made up of the words meaning “up” or “high” and “heart.” We translate it as “Lift up your hearts,” by which we mean to set your mind, will, and emotion upon the Lord.

³ Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8

⁴ Psalm 118:26; Mark 11:9-10; in Hebrew, as seen in Psalm 118, “hosanna” was a cry for help. This psalm (along with psalms 113-117) was used liturgically during the Festival of Tabernacles. As that festival transformed from one of petition to one of rejoicing, the word “hosanna” came to be used as a shout of praise or blessing, as it is in Mark 11. It was also associated with the coming of Messiah, which is why the religious leaders were so upset that the disciples of Jesus were proclaiming this as he entered the temple.

⁵ Exodus 6:7; Isaiah 48:12; Hosea 11:1; Romans 9:4

⁶ John 1:14; Hebrews 1:1-4

⁷ Acts 2:17; 2 Timothy 3:1; Hebrews 1:2; 2 Peter 3:3; “last days” refers to the time we are currently in and have been in since the first coming of Christ. These are the final days before the second coming of Christ.

⁸ John 1:14; “incarnate” is not a word found in the Bible. It comes from the Latin *in* and *caro* meaning “clothed in flesh.” It refers to the act of the eternal Son of God becoming fully man. It is a central and vital doctrine of the Christian faith. Jesus is fully God and fully man.

⁹ Isaiah 49:26; Acts 13:23; 2 Peter 2:20; Galatians 4:5; Titus 2:13-14; “Savior” comes from the Greek *soter* and means “one who rescues

another from peril.” “Redeemer” comes from the Greek *lytrotes* and refers to one who frees another by paying a ransom. Christ is both our Savior and our Redeemer.

¹⁰ John 8:31-32; 14:17; Colossians 1:21; 1 John 4:6

¹¹ Romans 6:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24

¹² John 5:24; Romans 6:4; 2 Timothy 1:10

¹³ Exodus 24:8; Mark 14:24; “covenant” refers to an agreement between two parties that orders the relationships of those involved. The New Covenant is a guarantee of God’s promise of salvation despite humankind’s sin because of the merits of Jesus Christ appropriated through faith.

¹⁴ Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-22; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

¹⁵ 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; because of what the Lord told his disciples to do, each time we participate in the Eucharist, we are recalling his death on our behalf, we are unashamedly declaring he has been raised from the dead, and we are acknowledging that we are in a time of anticipation and longing as we look for our Lord Jesus Christ to return.

¹⁶ Psalm 50:14; Jonah 2:9; Hebrews 13:15; “sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving” refers to our offering to God of worship and gratitude for all that He has accomplished on our behalf, especially through the work of Christ on the cross. This sacrifice that we make should be done through both our lips and our lives.

¹⁷ “Send your Holy Spirit” is referred to as the Epiclesis, coming from the Greek *epiclesis* meaning “invocation.” By it, we ask God to make ordinary bread and wine into the spiritual realities of Christ’s Body and Blood. In our Anglican understanding, the elements are not becoming the *actual* body and blood of Christ, nor is this limited to just a memorial. Rather, in a spiritual way, Christ is spiritually present as we partake of the elements in faith.

¹⁸ Romans 6:5; 2 Corinthians 4:10-11; Galatians 2:20

¹⁹ John 3:17; Romans 5:2; Colossians 1:20

²⁰ Romans 15:16; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Ephesians 1:13; not only do we ask God to transform the elements through his Holy Spirit, but we also ask that He might graciously set us apart as well by the same Holy Spirit.

²¹ 1 Corinthians 15:27-28; Ephesians 1:22; Philippians 2:9-11

²² Colossians 1:15; “firstborn” is not a reference to Christ’s birth as Jesus the son of Mary and Joseph, nor does it suggest that Christ is a created being. The Greek *prototokos* (firstborn) can refer to birth order, but also to having the special status associated with the firstborn, namely being preeminent. In Exodus 4:22, Israel is God’s firstborn, and in Psalm 89:27, David is appointed as the firstborn. These are references to preeminence. In Colossians, this word refers to Christ being preeminent over all creation.

²³ Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18

²⁴ Hebrews 2:10 (ESV “founder” instead of “author”)

²⁵ Romans 11:36

²⁶ Luke 11:1-2

²⁷ The Latin Agnus Dei means “Lamb of God.”

²⁸ John 1:29; in the Old Testament, the lamb was a sacrificial offering as seen in the Abraham and Isaac account (Genesis 22:7), the Passover where the blood of the lamb saved the first born in each family (Exodus 12:1-13), and in Leviticus for a sin offering (4:32; 5:6; 9:3). To call Jesus the Lamb of God is to indicate that Jesus will be slaughtered as God’s offering for the sins of the world (1 John 2:2).

²⁹ Psalm 123:3; Matthew 9:27

³⁰ John 14:27

³¹ The Prayer of Humble Access first appeared in the 1548 Order of the Communion. Written by Thomas Cranmer, the prayer served a beautiful function in its first appearance. Within the liturgy, it came just before the people would receive communion. This is significant because during this time period, only the priest had a personal prayer that he said for himself before receiving communion. There was nothing for the people. A major element of the Reformation was bringing the Word and Sacrament to the people. With the addition of the Prayer of Humble Access, now it was not only the priest who prayed, but the people as well.

³² Romans 10:3; Philippians 3:9; Titus 3:5

³³ Daniel 9:18; 1 Peter 1:3

³⁴ Matthew 15:21-28 tells the story of a Canaanite woman who exercised great faith. To express this faith to Jesus the woman used the image of crumbs under a table.

³⁵ Psalm 33:11; Isaiah 54:11; Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8; James 1:17; God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He can always and forever be relied upon.

³⁶ Exodus 33:19; 2 Samuel 24:14; Psalm 25:6; Matthew 9:13; Ephesians 2:4

³⁷ John 6:53-55; 1 Corinthians 11:25

³⁸ John 17:20-23

³⁹ Sancta sanctis: This Latin phrase translates as “The holy for the holy” or “The Holy things for the holy people.” It is the invitation to come to communion. This invitation means that these gifts of bread and wine are set apart from ordinary bread and wine for a people who are also set apart because they are in Christ.

⁴⁰ As we receive the bread and the wine, we do so in remembrance of the sacrifice that Christ made for us on the cross as the Lamb of God, we encounter the living Christ through communion as we partake in faith, and all of this is done with a heart of thanksgiving. The word Eucharist comes from the Greek word *eucharistia* which means “thanksgiving.”